



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

---

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING**  
**Via Webex**  
**February 15, 2023**  
**9:30 A.M.**

***I. Call to Order***

Commissioner Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:31 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquist, and Greg Piecuch were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present and present via Webex.

***II. Approval of the Minutes***

*1. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of February 1, 2023*

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of February 1, 2023. So voted by a vote of 2-0-2 with Commissioners Ajello and Piecuch abstaining.

*2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of February 8, 2023*

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of February 8, 2023. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

***III. Administrative Reports***

Director Brandi provided several updates. Budget wise - Gov. Lamont released the budget last week. There are no changes made to proposal and expect no issues at the budget address that is scheduled for tomorrow. About 95% of budget is allocated for payroll and a small percentage is allocated for operating expenses such as copiers, paper, and misc. IT expenses.

GAE has a series of legislative proposals (about 6-8 bills) that are campaign finance related. SEEC staff continue to monitor and speak on bills raised on campaign finance and the agency. Staff don't know yet what exactly will be in the bills. Fully drafted bills will be released in 2-3 weeks. But staff anticipate the increase of monies that state parties receive from individuals. It also looks like there is some interest to raise Governor grant amount, as well as Gubernatorial candidates to receive pre-convention grants. Again, staff will comment as soon as drafts comes out.

Interviews for IT managers have commenced. Certified list for attorney position has also been received. There are some IT changes from DAS regarding upgrades of servers. We do not want to make a 6-figure investment until DAS has a plan for server upgrades and a new data center.

**IV. *Executive Session per General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B) and (E), and 1-210(b)(1), (3),(4),(10) and General Statutes §9-7a, as amended by Public Act 11-48 §300 (Preliminary draft and agency consideration of enforcement action and exempt records relative thereto)***

1. Recommendation of Counsel: Discussion of Candidate Committee Validation Memoranda

Executive session was not convened.

**V. *Consideration of Application for Public Grants from the Citizens' Election Fund***

1. *"DebKforCT", Deborah Kleckowski*

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the grant application for *"DebKforCT", Deborah Kleckowski*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. *"Anabel Figueroa 2023", Anabel Figueroa*

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the grant application for *"Anabel Figueroa 2023", Anabel Figueroa*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. *"Olga Anastos for State Representative", Olga Anastos*

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the grant application for *"Olga Anastos for State Representative", Olga Anastos*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

**VI. *Pending Complaints and Investigations***

**A. *Public Session***

1. In re. Commission Initiated Investigation into *"Stevenson4CT"*

File No. 2022-023B

Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondents:

Attorney:

Legal Investigator:

Michele L. Berardo and

Elizabeth P. Smith

William B. Smith

Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2022-023B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2022-023B. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by LeReine Frampton, Newtown  
File No. 2022-017

Proposed Findings & Conclusions

Respondents:

Geraldine Bepko and Danny  
Joseph Bepko

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings and Conclusions in File No. 2022-017. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings and Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings and Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2022-017. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings and Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

**VII. Executive Session per General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B) and (E), and 1-210(b)(1), (3),(4),(10) and General Statutes §9-7a, as amended by Public Act 11-48 §300**  
*(Preliminary draft and agency consideration of enforcement action and exempt records relative thereto)*

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello at 9:52 A.M. to proceed into Executive Session pursuant to General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B) and (E), and 1-210(b)(1), (3),(4),(10) to discuss strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and exempt records. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

Commissioners Penny, Ajello, Bergquist, and Piecuch were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were: Michael J. Brandi, Shannon Clark Kief, Salman Munir, William Smith, Lisa Drew, Stephanie Fish, Scott Branfuhr, Ronald Perry, Sheri-Lyn Lagueux, Patricia Mwilwa, Lindsey Leung, Joshua Foley, Paul Brady, Geetha Natarajan, Renata Rydzewski, and Stephen Palmer.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:03 A.M.

Returning to public session, the Commission took the following action:

1. Recommendation of Counsel: Necessary to Investigate Determination pursuant to General Statutes §9-7a, as amended by Public Act 11-48 §300

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated February 9, 2023 and requested that five (5) matter be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to five (5) complaint File No. 2023-003, 2023-004, 2023-005, 2023-006 and 2023-007. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Referral by the New Haven Registrar of Voters  
File No. 2017-044  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings and Conclusions in File No. 2017-044. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings and Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings and Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2017-044. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings and Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Karen Cortes and Susan Salina, Simsbury  
File No. 2021-161  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and recommendation of counsel in File No. 2021-161. He recommended that the Commission consider and approve the following Motion: *“Pursuant to its authority under General Statutes § 9-7b, the Commission authorizes counsel to refer to the United States Department of Justice and the United States Attorney for Connecticut evidence of possible criminal violations related to an election, primary, or referendum discovered in the investigation of matter 2021-161”*.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the above motion and refer to the United State Department of

Justice and the United States Attorney for Connecticut File No. 2021-161.  
So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Robert Natt, Easton  
File No. 2021-196

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Commission Decision in File No. 2021-196. He recommended adoption of the Commission Decision.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Commission Decision as to a dismissal, without prejudice in File No. 2021-196. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Commission Decision will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by David B. Lampart, Woodbury  
File No. 2022-027

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Christopher Brechlin, Wethersfield  
File No. 2022-041

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings and Conclusions in File No. 2022-041. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings and Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings and Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2022-041. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings and Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

7. In re. Commission Initiated Investigation into *Marotta 4 Senate*

File No. 2022-051

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

The matter is marked off.

8. In the Matter of a Complaint by Donna Veach, Berlin

File No. 2021-214

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings and Conclusions in File No. 2021-214. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings and Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings and Conclusions in File No. 2021-214. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings and Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

9. Draft Audit Reports – 2020 Election Cycle

1. “Friends of Dorinda”, Dorinda Borer

Accounts Examiner: Nicole Duffany

2. “Friends of Travis Simms”, Travis Simms

Accounts Examiner: Rhonda Salvatore

Director of Disclosure & Audit, Salman Munir provided an overview of the above and recommended that the Commission make audits number 1 and 2 final. So moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make the above draft audits final. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

***VIII. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session***

***IX. Adjournment***

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello at 11:20 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

***The next regular scheduled meeting is March 1, 2023 at 9:30 A.M. via Webex.***